

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 89 without my signature.

Although I share the Legislature's interest in exploring ways to provide health coverage to the uninsured, I have doubts that this report would provide useful information. The report would not account for the complex and multi-faceted decision-making process that employees and employers consider when choosing health insurance options or differentiate between part-time, seasonal and full-time workers.

Rather than imposing new reporting mandates that will be of limited or no benefit, we should strategically focus marketing of public health care programs to the harder to reach and under-enrolled Medi-Cal and Healthy Families populations. The Legislature did just that in the current budget when, at my request, they appropriated funds to reinstate the Healthy Families Certified Application Assistance program (CAA). The CAA program has proven to be an effective means for successfully enrolling children in Healthy Families and Medi-Cal. Such focused, strategic investments will actually help us enroll more eligible Californians in Medi-Cal and Health Families. The report required by this bill will do nothing to decrease the number of uninsured and I do not believe that it will yield valuable information to help in this effort.

For these reasons, I am returning Assembly Bill 89 without my signature.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger